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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/633,100	07/31/2003	Kenneth J. Klar	664.750	3187
21707	7590	12/01/2004	EXAMINER	
IAN F. BURNS & ASSOCIATES 1575 DELUCCHI LANE, SUITE 222 RENO, NV 89502			LERNER, AVRAHAM H	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			3611	

DATE MAILED: 12/01/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	10/633,100	KLAR, KENNETH J. <i>[Signature]</i>	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on ____.
- 2a) This action is FINAL. 2b) This action is non-final.
- 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) Claim(s) 1-23 is/are pending in the application.
 - 4a) Of the above claim(s) ____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) Claim(s) ____ is/are allowed.
- 6) Claim(s) 1-9 and 15-17 is/are rejected.
- 7) Claim(s) 10-14 and 18-23 is/are objected to.
- 8) Claim(s) ____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) The drawing(s) filed on 31 July 2003 is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.

Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).

Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 - a) All b) Some * c) None of:
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. ____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)	4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)	Paper No(s)/Mail Date: ____
3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)	5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date: ____	6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: ____

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Objections

1. Claims 8-15 and 21-23 are objected to because of the following informalities: in line 6 of claim 8, "yoker" should be changed to read "yoke"; in line 8 of claim 21, "a." should be changed to read "d.". Appropriate correction is required.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

2. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

3. Claims 1-7 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

4. In line 6 of claim 1, the lock assembly is positively recited for a second time in the claim. The recitation of "a lock assembly" should be changed to "the lock assembly" to clarify that it is the same element which was introduced in line 4 of claim 1.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

5. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

6. Claims 1, 2, 7-9, and 15-17 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Parent (U.S. Patent No. 5,765,851).

Parent discloses a device which, if used in normal and usual operation, teaches a method comprising all steps as claimed, including providing a drawbar (34); providing a yoke (e.g. 28) rotatably connected to the drawbar; providing a lock assembly (70); rotating the yoke toward the drawbar; and engaging the lock assembly which is adapted to retain the yoke to the drawbar.

Allowable Subject Matter

7. Claims 21-23 would be allowable if rewritten or amended to overcome the informality objections set forth above in this Office action.
8. Claims 3-6 and 10-14 would be allowable if rewritten to overcome the informality objections and/or rejections under 35 U.S.C. 112, 2nd paragraph, set forth in this Office action and to include all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.
9. Claims 18-20 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Conclusion

10. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. Jorgenson (U.S. Patent No. 4,273,352), Roos (U.S. Patent No. 2,378,504), Wber (U.S. Patent No. 4,509,769), Moss (U.S. Patent No. 6,460,870), Rowland et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,364,337), Hinte (U.S. Patent No. 5,873,595), Roberts et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,503,423), and Craven (U.S. Patent No. 4,548,423) disclose trailer hitch assemblies having towbars and locking mechanisms for storage.

1.1. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Avraham Lerner whose telephone number is (703) 308-0423.

The examiner can normally be reached on M-F (8:15-5:45) first Wednesday off.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Lesley Morris can be reached on (703) 308-0629. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

AVRAHAM LERNER
PRIMARY EXAMINER

A. Lerner 11/29/04

November 29, 2004